Walleyes Forever

P.O. Box 21852
Billings, Mont. 59104

Senate Fish and Game Committee
February 5, 2007

Dear Senators,

We are writing on behalf of the membership of **WALLEYES FOREVER**, a fishing club based in Billings with a rapidly growing statewide membership, to tell you that we **STRONGLY SUPPORT SENATE BILL 402** and feel its passage is extremely important to all Montanans.

Our club is in full support of doing away with the $5 Warm Water Fishing Stamp and replacing it with a $2 increase in the general fishing license to fund the Fort Peck Fish Hatchery. It's a logical and fair solution that all anglers pay for all hatchery operations, whether they're cold-water hatcheries or warm-water hatcheries.

We would also advocate two changes to the bill that would make it more workable and equitable to all fishermen in Montana.

We believe all species restrictions should be removed on Fort Peck Fish Hatchery. It was designed and built to raise warm water fish species and we are comfortable with the fact that warm water fish will remain the primary focus of the facility. But, if other fishing needs of Montana can also be met there as well, we feel that those should also be allowed for the betterment of all, just as all the other hatcheries operate in this state.

We also would like to urge that the nonresident two-day license also have the additional $2 added to it. Many of these licenses are sold each year and it would add significantly to the funding base for Fort Peck Hatchery, with any excess available for other needs that the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks faces in improving our fisheries.

In short, we applaud Sen. Sam Kitzenberg's efforts on behalf of the fishermen of Montana in introducing this bill and urge you to do whatever you can to pass SB 402 into law.

Sincerely,
Nathan McClenning, President
Jerry Richardson, Vice-President
Carol Henckel, Secretary
Linda Granholm, Treasurer

Walleyes Forever: Making Montana a better place for all fish and for fishermen of all ages